

OUR CHAMPION NO. 3009

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“And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.”
Judges 16:3

POOR Samson! We cannot say much about him as an example to believers. We must hold him up in two lights—as a beacon, and as a prodigy. He is a beacon to us all, for he shows us that no strength of body can suffice to deliver from weakness of mind. Here was a man whom no fellow-man could overcome, but he lost his eyes through a woman—a man mighty enough to rend a lion like a kid, yet in due time, though himself stronger than a lion, he was bound with fetters of brass. When I think of the infatuation of which Samson was the subject, and remember that we are men of like passions with him, I can only, for myself, put up the prayer, “Lord, hold thou me up, and I shall be safe,” and urge you to do likewise.

And Samson is also a prodigy. He is more a wonder as a believer than he is even as a man. It is marvelous that a man could smite thousands of Philistines with no better weapon than the jaw-bone of a newly-killed ass, but it is still more marvelous that Samson should be a saint, ranked among those illustrious ones saved by faith, though such a sinner. The apostle Paul has put him among the worthies in the eleventh chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, and Paul wrote by inspiration, therefore there can be no mistake about the fact that Samson was saved.

Indeed, when I see his childlike faith, and note the way in which he dashed against the Philistines, and smote them, hip and thigh, with a great slaughter—the way in which he cast aside all reckonings and probabilities, and in simple confidence in his God achieved the most tremendous feats of valor—when I see this, I cannot but wonder and admire.

The Old Testament biographies were never written for our imitation, but they were written for our instruction. Upon this one matter, what a volume of force there is in such lessons! “See,” says God, “what faith can do. Here is a man, full of infirmities, a sorry fool, yet through his childlike faith, he lives. ‘The just shall live by faith.’ He has many sad flaws and failings, but his heart is right towards his God, he does trust in the Lord, and he does give himself up as a man consecrated to his Lord’s service, and therefore, he is saved.”

I look upon Samson’s case as a great wonder, put in Scripture for the encouragement of great sinners. If such a man as Samson, nevertheless, prevails by faith to enter the kingdom of heaven, so shall you and I. Though our characters may have been disfigured by many vices, and we may have committed a multitude of sins, if we can but trust Christ to save us, he will purge us with hyssop, and we shall be clean, he will wash us, and we shall be whiter than snow, and in our death we shall fall asleep in the arms of sovereign mercy to wake up in the likeness of Christ.

But now I am going to leave Samson alone, except as he may furnish us with a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ. Samson, like many other Old Testament heroes, was a type of our Lord. He is specially so in this case, and I shall invite you to look at Christ rather than at Samson. First, *come and behold our Champion at His work*, then, *let us go and survey the work when He has accomplished it*, and thirdly, *let us inquire what use we can make of the work which he has performed*.

I. Come with me, then, brethren, and LOOK AT OUR MIGHTY CHAMPION AT HIS WORK.

You remember when our Samson, our Lord Jesus, came down to the Gaza of this world, 'twas love that brought Him, love to a most unworthy object, for He loved the sinful church which had gone astray from Him many and many a time, yet He came from heaven, and left the ease and delights of His Father's palace to put Himself among the Philistines, the sons of sin and Satan here below.

It was rumored among men that the Lord of glory was in the world, and straightway they took counsel together how they should slay Him. Herod makes a clean sweep of all the children of two years old and under, that he may be sure to slay the newborn Prince. Afterwards, scribes and priests and lawyers hunt and hound Him. Satan tempts Him in the wilderness and provokes Him when in public. Death also pursues Him, for he has marked Him as his prey. At last, the time comes when the triple host of the Savior's foes has fairly environed Him, and shut Him in.

They have dragged Him before Pilate, they have scourged Him on the pavement, they drag Him to the place called Calvary, while His blood drips upon the stones of Jerusalem's streets, they pierce His hands and His feet, they lift Him up, a spectacle of scorn and suffering, and now, while dying in pangs extreme, and especially when He closes His eyes, and cries out, "It is finished," sin, Satan, and death all feel that they have the Champion safe. There He lies silently in the tomb. He, who is to bruise the old serpent's head, is Himself bruised. O Thou who art the world's great Deliverer there Thou liest, as dead as any stone! Surely Thy foes have led Thee captive, O Thou mighty Samson!

He sleeps, but think not that He is unconscious of what is going on. He knows everything. He sleeps till the proper moment comes, and then our Samson awakes, and what happens now? He is in the tomb, and His foes have set a guard and a seal that they may keep Him there. Will any help Him now to escape out of their charge? Is there any man who will aid Him now? No, there is none! If the Champion escapes, it must be by His own single-handed valor. Will He make a clear way for Himself, and come up from the midst of His foes? You know He will, my brethren, for the moment the third day comes, He touches the stone, and it is rolled away.

He has defeated death, He has pulled up the posts of the grave, and taken away its gates and bars. As for sin, He treads that beneath His feet, He has utterly overthrown it, and Satan, too, lies broken beneath the heel that once was bruised, he has broken the old dragon's head, and cut his power in pieces for ever. Solitary and alone, His own arm brings salvation unto Him, and His righteousness sustains Him. Methinks I see Him now as He goes up that hill which is before Hebron—the hill of God. He bears upon His shoulders the uplifted gates of the grave—the tokens of His victory over death and hell. Doors and posts, and bar and all, He bears them up to heaven. In sacred triumph He drags His enemies behind Him.

Sing to Him! Angels, praise Him in your hymns! Exalt Him, cherubim and seraphim! Our mightier Samson hath gotten to Himself the victory, and cleared the road to heaven and eternal life for all His people. You know the story. I have told it ill, but it is the most magnificent of all stories that ever were told. "Arms, and the man, I sing," said one of the great classic poets of old, but I can say, "The cross and the Christ, I sing." 'Tis my delight to tell of Him who espoused the cause of His people, and though for a while a captive, broke the green withes and fetters of brass, and having gained the victory for Himself, liberated others also, then goes, at the head of His emancipated people, along the way which He has opened—the new way which leadeth to the right hand of God.

II. Let us go now, dear brethren, and calmly SURVEY THE WORK WHICH CHRIST HAS ACCOMPLISHED.

We will stand at the gates of old Gaza and see what the champion has done. Those are ponderous hinges, and they must have held up huge doors. We will look at these doors, and posts, and this bar. Why, it is a mass of iron that ten men could hardly lift, and it might take fifty more to carry those huge doors. They were scarcely moved, even on their hinges, without the efforts of a dozen men, and yet this one man carried them all, and I read not that his shoulders were bent, or that he grew weary. Seven miles at least Samson carried that tremendous load, uphill all the way, too! Still he bore it all without staggering, nor do I find that he was faint as he was aforetime at Ramath-lehi.

I will not linger upon Samson's exploits, rather would I lift up your thoughts to the great Captain of our salvation. See what Christ has carried away. I said that He had three enemies. These three beset Him, and He has achieved a threefold victory over them.

There was *death*. My dear friends, Christ, in being first overcome by death, made Himself Conqueror over death, and He hath given us also the victory, for concerning death, we may truly say that Christ has not only opened the gates, but He has taken them away, and not the gates only, but the very posts, and the bar, and all. Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light."

He hath abolished it in this sense—that, in the first place, the curse of death is gone. Believers die, but they do not die for their sins. "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." We die, but it is not any longer as a punishment. It is the fruit of sin, but it is not the curse of sin that makes the believer die. To other men, death is a curse, to the believer, I may almost put it among his covenant blessings, for to sleep in Jesus Christ is one of the greatest mercies that the Lord can give to His believing people. The curse of death, then, being taken away, we may say that the posts are pulled up.

Christ has also taken away the after results of death, the soul's exposure to the second death. Unless Christ had redeemed us, death, indeed, would have been terrible, for it would have been the shore of the great lake of fire. When the wicked die, their punishment at once begins, and when they rise again, at the general resurrection, it is but to receive in their bodies and in their souls the due reward of their sins. The sting of death is the second death—that which is to come afterwards.

*"To die—to sleep—
To sleep! perchance, to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come!"*

said the world's poet—nay, not what "dreams" may come, but what substantial pains, what dread miseries, what everlasting sorrows will come! These are not for Christians. There is no hell for you, believer. Christ has taken away posts, and bar, and all. Death is not to you any longer the gate of torment, but the gate of paradise.

Moreover, Christ has not only taken away the curse, and the after results of death, but from many of us He has taken away even the fear of death. He came on purpose to "deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." There are not a few here who could conscientiously say that they do not dread death, nay, but rather look forward to it with joyful expectation. We have become so accustomed to think of our last hours that we die daily, and when the last hour shall arrive, we shall only say, "Our marriage day has come."

*"Welcome, sweet hour of full discharge,
That sets my longing soul at large."*

We shall joyfully hail the summons to mount beyond this land of woes, and sighs, and tears to be present with our God. The fear of death having been taken away, we may truly say that Christ has taken away posts, and bar, and all.

Besides, beloved, there is a sense in which it may be said that Christians never die at all. Jesus said to Martha, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Saints do not die, they do but—

"Sleep in Jesus, and are blessed."

But the main sense in which Christ has pulled up the posts of the gates of death is that He has brought in a glorious resurrection. O grave, thou canst not hold thy prisoners, for they must rise! O death, thy troops of worms may seem to devastate that fair land human flesh and blood, but that body

shall rise again blooming with more beauty than that with which it fell asleep. It shall upstart from its bed of dust, and silent clay, to dwell in realms of everlasting day.

Conceive the picture if you can! If you have imagination, let the scene now present itself before your eyes. Christ, the greater Samson, sleeping in the dominions of death, death boasting and glorifying itself that now it has conquered the Prince of life, Christ waking, striding to that gate, dashing it aside, taking it upon His shoulders, carrying it away, and saying as He mounts to heaven, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

Another host which Christ had to defeat *was the army of sin*. Christ had come among sinners, and sins beset Him round. Your sins and my sins beleaguered the Savior till He became their captive. “In Him was no sin,” yet sins “compassed Him about like bees.” Sin was imputed to Him, the sins of all His people stood in His way to keep Him as well as them out of heaven.

When Christ was on the cross, my brethren, He was looked upon by God as a sinner, though He never had been a sinner, and when in the grave, He could not rise until He was justified. Christ must be justified as well as His people. He was justified not as we are, but by His own act. We are not justified by acts of our own as He was. All the sin of the elect was laid upon Christ, He suffered its full penalty, and so was justified. The token of His justification lay in His resurrection. Christ was justified by rising from the dead, and in Him all His people were justified too.

I may say, therefore, that all our sins stood in the way of Christ’s resurrection, they were the great iron gate, and they were the bar of brass, that shut Him out from heaven. Doubtless, we might have thought that Christ would be a prisoner for ever under the troops of sin, but oh, see Him, my brethren! See how the mighty Conqueror, as He bears our sins “in His own body on the tree,” stands with unbroken bones beneath the enormous load, bearing—

*“All that incarnate God could bear,
With strength enough, but none to spare.”*

See how he takes those sins of ours upon His shoulders, and carries them right up from His tomb, and hurls them away into the deep abyss of forgetfulness, where, if they be sought for, they shall not be found any more for ever. As for the sins of all God’s people, they are not partly taken away, but they are as clean removed as ever the gates of Gaza were—posts, gates, bar, and all, that is to say, every sin of God’s people is forgiven.

*“There’s pardon for transgressions past,
It matters not how black their cast;
And oh, my soul, with wonder view,
For sins to come there’s pardon too!”*

Every sin that all the elect ever did commit, are now committing, or ever shall commit, was taken away by Christ, taken upon His shoulders in His great atoning sacrifice, and carried away. There is no sin in God’s book against any of His people, He seeth no sin in Jacob, neither iniquity in Israel, they are justified in Christ for ever.

Moreover, as the guilt of sin was taken away, the punishment of sin was consequently taken away too. For the Christian there is no stroke from God’s angry hand, nay, not so much as a single frown of punitive justice. The believer may be chastised by a Father’s hand, but God, the Judge of all, has nothing to say to the Christian, except, “I have absolved thee: thou art acquitted.” For the Christian, there is no hell, no penal death, much less any second death.

He is completely freed from all the punishment as well as the guilt of sin, and the power of sin is removed too. It may stand in our way to keep us in perpetual warfare, but oh, my brethren, sin is to us a conquered foe. There is no sin which a Christian cannot overcome if he will only rely upon his God to enable him to do so. They who wear their white robes in heaven overcame through the blood of the

Lamb, and you and I may do the same. There is no lust too mighty, no besetting sin too strongly entrenched, we can drive these Canaanites out, though they have cities walled unto heaven, we can pull their cities down, and overcome them through the power of Christ.

Do believe, Christian, that thy sin is virtually a dead thing. It may kick and struggle. There is force enough in it for that, but it is a dead thing. God has written condemnation across its brow. Christ has crucified it, “nailing it to his cross.” Do you go now and bury it forever, and the Lord help you to live to His praise! Oh, blessed be His name, sin, with the guilt, the power, the shame, the fear, the terror of it, is gone. Christ has taken posts, and bar, and all up to the top of the hill.

Then there was a third enemy, and he also has been destroyed—that was *Satan*. Our Savior’s sufferings were not only an atonement for sin, but they were a conflict with Satan, and a conquest over him. Satan is a defeated foe. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the church of Christ, but Christ has prevailed against the gates of hell.

As for Satan, the posts, and bar, and all have been plucked up from his citadel in this sense—that Satan has now no reigning power over believers. He may bark at us like a dog, and he may go about like a roaring lion, but to rend and to devour us are not in his power. There is a chain about the devil’s neck, and he can only go as far as God likes, but no further. He could not tempt Job without first asking God’s leave, and he cannot tempt you without first getting God’s permission. There is a permit needed before the devil dares so much as look on a believer, and so, being under divine permission, he will not be allowed to tempt us above what we are able to bear.

Moreover, the exceeding terror of Satan is also taken away. A Man has met Apollyon foot to foot and overcome him. That Man in death triumphed over Satan, so may you and I. The *prestige* of the old enemy is gone. The dragon’s head has been broken, and you and I need not fear to fight with a broken-headed adversary. When I read John Bunyan’s description of Christian’s fight with Apollyon, I am struck with the beauty and truth of the description, but I cannot help thinking, “If Christian had but known how thoroughly Apollyon had been thrashed in days gone by, by his Master, he would have thrown that in his face, and made short work of him.”

Never encounter Satan without recollecting that great victory that Christ achieved on the tree. Do not be afraid, Christian, of Satan’s devices or threatenings. Be on your watch-tower against him. Strive against him, but fear him not. Resist him, being bold in the faith, for it is not in his power to keep the feeblest saint out of heaven, for all the gates which he has put up to impede our march have been taken away, posts, and bar, and all, and our God the Lord has gotten to Himself the victory over all the hosts of hell.

III. We will now see HOW WE CAN USE THIS VICTORY.

Surely there is some comfort here—*comfort for you, dear friend, over yonder*. You have a desire to be saved, God has impressed you with a deep sense of sin, the very strongest wish of your soul is that you might have peace with God. But you think there are so many difficulties in the way—Satan, your sins, and I know not what.

Beloved, let me tell thee, in God’s name, there is no difficulty whatever in the way except in thine own heart, for Christ has taken away the gates of Gaza—posts, bar, and all. Mary Magdalene said to the other Mary, or the women said to one another, when they went to the sepulcher, “Who shall roll us away the stone?” That is what you are saying. And when they came to the place, the stone was rolled away. That is your case, poor troubled conscience, the stone is rolled away.

What! you cannot believe it? Here is God’s testimony for it, “Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” You want an atonement for your sins, do you? “It is finished.” You want someone to speak for you. “He is able to save unto the uttermost, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.” Canst thou believe in the mercy of God in Christ, and rest thy poor guilty soul upon the merit of His doing and the virtue of His dying? If thou canst, God is reconciled to thee.

There may have been great mountains between thee and God, but they are all gone. There may have been the Red Sea of thy sins rolling between thee and thy Father. That Red Sea is dried up. I tell thee, soul, if thou believest in Christ Jesus, not only is there a way of access between thy soul and God, but there is a clear way. You remember, when Christ died, the veil of the temple was rent in twain. There was not a little slit for sinners to creep through, but it was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom, so that big sinners might come, just in the same way as when Samson pulled up gates, posts, bar, and all, there was a clear way out into the country for all who were locked up in the town. Prisoner, the prison doors are open. Captive, loose the bonds on thy neck, be free! I sound the trumpet of jubilee. Bond-slaves, Christ hath redeemed you. Ye who have sold—

*“Your heritage for nought,
Shall have it back unbought,
The gift of Jesu’s love.”*

The Lord hath anointed His Son Jesus “to preach deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” Trust thou Him. May His mercy lead thee to trust Him now, for there is really nothing to prevent thy salvation if thou retest in Him. Between thy soul and God, I tell thee, there is no dividing wall. “He is our peace, who hath made both one....and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.” May these precious words be treasured up by such as need them! Some of you need them. May the Spirit of God put them into your hearts, and lay them up there, that you may find comfort in Christ!

But is there not something more here? Is there not here *a ground of exhortation to Christians*? Brethren, have not some of you been tolerating some sin—some besetting sin, which you think you cannot overcome? You would be more holy, but the thought that you are not able to overcome it makes your arm nerveless against your own sin. So you think that Christ has left the posts, do you? I tell you, no, “whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.” He that is born of God sinneth not with allowance, he sinneth not with constancy, and it is in his power, with the Holy Spirit’s aid, to overcome his sin, and it is his duty, as well as his privilege, to go to war against the stoutest of his corruptions till he shall tread them under foot.

Now, will you believe, brethren, that, in the blood of Christ, and in the water that flowed with it from His side, there is a sovereign virtue to kill your sins? There is nothing standing between you and the pardon of your sins but your unbelief, and if you will but shake that off, you shall march triumphantly through the gate of glory.

Once more, and I have done. Is not this *an incentive for us, who profess to be servants of Christ, to go out and fight with the world, and overcome it for Christ*? Brethren, where Jesus leads us, it needs not much courage for us to follow. “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof.” Let us go and take it for Him! Nations that sit in darkness shall see a great light. Satan may have locked up the world with bigotry, with idolatry, and with superstition, as with posts and bars, but the kingdom is the Lord’s, and if we will but rouse ourselves to preach the Word, we shall find that the Breaker has gone up before us, and broken and torn away the gates, and posts, and bar, and all, and we have nothing to do but to enjoy an early victory. God help us to do so!

And now, as we come to the Lord’s table, let us have before us this vision of our glorious Samson achieving His mighty victory, and while we weep for sin, let us praise His superlative power and love that have wrought such marvels for us. The Lord give us to enjoy His presence at His table, and He shall have the praise! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

PSALM 51

A psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, and rebuked him, in the name of God, for his great sin with Bathsheba.

Verse 1. *Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.*

This is not a Psalm to be sung to the joyous music of the harp and the viol, but rather to the minor music of sighs, and groans, and tears. You must have the picture of weeping David before your mind's eye if you would really get to the heart and soul of his language here. There is only one thing on the psalmist's heart, and that is the consciousness of his great sin, which seemed to swallow up everything else. He feels that he must have that sin forgiven, he cannot rest until he knows that it is pardoned.

Note how he makes his appeal to the lovingkindness and tender mercies of God. A sinner under a sense of sin has a keen eye for the mercy of God, for he knows that there is his only hope, and therefore he looks for it as a mariner at sea looks for a star, and will not allow even one to escape his observation if there be but one visible between the rifts of the clouds. David urges the most powerful plea with God, "According to thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

2. *Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.*

For he loathes it, it is abominable in his sight, his whole spirit seems sickened at the very recollection of it. He not merely prays, "Wash me," but "Wash me thoroughly." Wash me thoroughly, not only from sin, but from the in-equity of it, the wrongdoing of it, that wherein it was essentially sin, and when Thou hast washed me, cleanse me, for, perhaps, washing will not be enough, there may need a cleansing by fire. Lord cleanse me anyhow, only do cleanse me from my sin."

3. *For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.*

He had tried to forget it, but he could not, for it haunted him wherever he went. He had put it behind his back, but now it had got in front of his eyes. It seemed as if it were painted on his eyeballs, and he could not see without seeing through his sin. This is how God makes men repent—how He makes sin to be like gall and wormwood to them.

4. *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.*

David had sinned against a great many others beside God, but the virus, the very poison of the sin, seemed to him to lie in this, that he had sinned against God. The unregenerate usually take no account of that, they care nothing about sinning against God. Offending men, doing some injury to their fellow-creatures, may cause them trouble, but as for offending God, they snap their fingers at that, and count it to be something not worth even thinking of. But when a man is really awakened by divine grace, he sees that sin is an attack upon God, an offense against God's very nature, and this becomes the heaviest burden to him. Do you know what this experience means, dear friends?

5. *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*

David has got further than seeing sin upon him, he sees that he is himself sinfulness, that his nature, his very being, is steeped and dyed in sin. The evil is, not merely that thou hast sinned, but that thou art a sinner. Sin would never come out of thee if it were not in thee. And oh, what mine of sin, what a bottomless deep of sin, there is in human nature! No wonder that it bursts forth as it does. As the volcano is but the index of a mighty seething ocean of devouring flame within the bowels of the earth so any one sin is only a token of far greater sinfulness that seethes and boils within the cauldron of our nature, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

6. *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts:*

"Alas, O Lord, it is not there! I have looked there, but have seen only sin. It is not truth, but the reverse of truth, that I find in my inward parts. Lord, Thou wilt never have what Thou desirest to see in me unless Thou dost put Thy hand to the work."

6. *And in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*

Yes, God can teach us. Even those hidden parts which no human teaching can reach, God can touch, and there He can make us to know wisdom.

7. *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean:*

“Sprinkle the blood of atonement upon me, give me a sacrificial cleansing, and then I shall be clean.”

7. *Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*

To my mind, this is a wonderful expression of faith, I do not know of any Scripture that seems more full of holy confidence than this is. David had such a deep sense of his sinfulness that it was a wonderful thing that he should have, side by side with it, such a perfect confidence in the power of God to cleanse him. It is easy enough to say, “I shall be whiter than snow,” when we do not realize what scarlet sinners we are, but when the crimson is before us, and we are startled by it, it requires a real and living faith to be able to say to God, “Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

8. *Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.*

God has a way of making our sins come home to us like the blows of great bone breaking hammers. I suppose that no pain can be much worse than that of a broken bone, but God can make the pain of sin in the conscience to be as continuous and as intense as that of broken bones, and then, blessed be His name, He knows how to heal the bones which He has broken, and to make each broken bone to sing and rejoice. Whereas it groaned before, He can give it a new power, and make that very bone to be a mouth out of which shall come praise to God.

9. *Hide thy face from my sins,—*

“Lord, look no more at them. Do not hide thy face from me, but hide it from my sins.”

*“O Thou that hear’st when sinners cry,
Though all my crimes before Thee lie,
Behold them not with angry look,
But blot their memory from Thy book!”*

9. *And blot out all mine iniquities.*

“Do not let them be recorded any longer, O Lord! Run Thy pen through them, let them not stand against me in thy books of remembrance!”

10. *Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.*

Here the truly quickened man speaks. It is not salvation from punishment he asks for, but salvation from the power of sin. He wants a new heart. He wants to have removed from him the defiling power of sin over his affections, “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” It will need the Creator to do it. Only the God who made the world can make me what I ought to be. Great Creator, put Thy hand to this work, ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.’”

11. *Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me,—*

“O Lord, do not thrust me into a dungeon, and say, ‘Thou shalt never be a favored child of mine again.’ ‘Take not thy Holy Spirit from me. That I should dread beyond everything else.’”

12. *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.*

“Lord, I shall slip again unless thou dost hold me up, and since thou canst not trust thy little child by himself, come and teach me how to walk.”

13. *Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.*

“If Thou wilt but teach me, and save me, and cleanse me, then I will tell to others what great things Thou hast done for me. I will tell out the story of Thy love that others also may prove its power.”

14. *Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.*

This was a wonderful prayer, but it was not wonderful that David should get relief when he called his sin by its right name. Another man, in his place, might have said, “I did not kill Uriah. It is true that I

had him put where he was likely to be slain, but then the sword devoureth one as well as another.” That was the way that David did hypocritically talk at first, but now that his conscience has been aroused, he confesses that he is a murderer, “Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God.”

15-16. *O Lord, open thou my lips: and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering,—*

How wonderfully a true sense of sin puts a man on the track of Evangelical doctrine, David could see that sin was too grievous a thing for the blood of sheep and bullocks to wash it away, and though he did not despise the ritual which God had ordained, he looked beyond it to something greater and better of which it was but a type.

17-18. *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*

This is a blessed end to David’s mournful Psalm. He felt that his sin had a tendency to do injury to the church of God—that he had, in fact, pulled down the towers of Zion by his iniquity, so he prays “Build thou the walls of Jerusalem.”

19. *Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.*

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